19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

784
777 A number of tabus are associated with signs of bad luck. Many of these signs are incidental to going on journeys. For example, if one sneezes on rising to start on a journey, or on the way hears the cry of a barking deer, or sees one of these animals or a snake crossing his path, or hears of somebody's death, or sees a civet-cat near his path, he must give up his excursion until another day. Otherwise, he will meet with an accident, fall sick, or experience some misfortune in his family. It was once the custom of those who were setting out on a trading journey to repeat the following words:

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"I am going to——— to trade.
O Snakes, do not cross my path.
O Barking-deer and Rabbits, do not hinder me.
I am going across my land and along my path.
There are many other paths on the earth.
O white Civet-cat, do not hinder me."

If divination shows that one's illness is due to having taken the wrong road on a recent journey, that road rests under a tabu for a period of from four to seven days. The branch of a tree is laid across the forbidden trail where it leaves the main path, and no one will enter it until the tabu is lifted. This is called the tabu of the road ("ta dü kleh"). When a death occurs in a village, the death tabu ("ta dü ta thi ta pgha") is observed until the burial ceremonies are over. Children and persons of weak constitution are kept from witnessing the removal of a corpse from the village, inasmuch as their "k'las" are said to be easily enticed away by that of the dead person. On an elephant hunt it is forbidden to mention the name of the beast, lest its spirit should hear and take alarm, thus destroying the chance of success in the chase. Instead it is called "ta hpa do" or "the great one." Other signs of ill luck surely bring their tabus. If one does not return from work on hearing the wildcat's cry, one will die. No one should live in a house whose owner dies, or by which a green pigeon flew while the house was building.

784
241 The observance of certain tabus are regarded as conducive to the production of good crops or of prosperity in other forms. When the people have made the offering, "theh a hku," they must refrain from going into their fields for seven days. Otherwise, the demons will follow them and spoil their crops. This tabu is known as "ta dü hkü ta dü theh." During the dark and the full of the moon, in February and July, respectively, when people say that "it is hot," meaning that conditions are unfavorable, they avoid work for

[805]